

POWER:
A SERMON

PREACHED AT

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, RICHMOND,

ON THE 13TH NOVEMBER, 1864.

BY

REV CHARLES MINNIGERODE, D. D.

[PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.]

RICHMOND, VA.

W. H. CLEMMITT, BOOK AND JOB PRINTER,
1864.

POWER :
A S E R M O N

PREACHED AT

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, RICHMOND,

ON THE 13TH NOVEMBER, 1864.

BY

REV. CHARLES MINNIGERODE, D. D.

[PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.]

RICHMOND, VA.
W. H. CLEMMITT, BOOK AND JOB PRINTER,
1864.

“POWER.”

I COR. IV: 20.

It is a single word to some meditations on which I would invite you this morning, my brethren : POWER. It is found throughout the Scripture, its idea pervades it from one end to the other. It is ascribed to God, and it is ascribed to man ; the attribute of God. “Power belongeth unto God ;” and by Him, the giver of every good and perfect gift, bestowed upon man, made in his likeness, “it is He that giveth them power.” In its highest sense it is pledged to the believer “power to become the sons of God,” power “to be like Christ in the world.” What is *power* ?

In our version it is used in two senses, indeed there are two words for it in the original Greek of the New Testament. The one (*exousia*) is rather the substratum of the other ; the possession, the authority and ability (we call that *power*) to put forth that quality, which in its exercise and its effects becomes what in Greek is called “*dynamis*,” *power* in the other sense ; or *power* as the gift, the endowment which is prerequisite to *power* as its manifestation. We can illustrate the difference in our Saviour’s life. Himself the highest revelation of God’s power, and hence called, “the power of God,” and to whom in his delegated character as the Christ or Messiah “all power is given in heaven and in earth,” he exercises that authority and ability in “his mighty works,” *his manifested power*. “The people glorified God who had given such power (such authority and ability) unto men ;” but as he performed them, “power” (in the English version “virtue,” in the Greek “*dynamis*”) went out of

him.” Such authority he delegates and the ability he communicates to his believers. He gives them power (*exousian*) he bestows it upon them, that they may manifest it in the *life of power*, in its exercise, in *the dynamic force*, which is to influence their own life and the life of the world, which is to produce results according to the ability and the mission entrusted to them. The idea is brought out clearly in those texts, in which power, *its reality*, is opposed to the mere *pretence* or *appearance* : “The kingdom of God is not in word but in power,” “having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.” Just as the Apostle John expresses the same contrast in other words, “let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth ;” and just as St. James opposes the mere hearer to the doer. Wherever and howsoever the word power is used, this is its bearing, in Mathematics and Méchanics, in Rhetoric, in Natural, in Moral and Mental Philosophy ; whatever sense we give it, it involves ability to effect results, to produce changes, power *to do, to make* things, facts, events (hence its Saxon synonym “*might*,” connected with the verbs “may” and “make.”)

It is to this life of power we are called. It is the creative, the vital, energizing, motive element of our nature, fraught with consequences both in its use and its neglect, resulting either in good or in evil ; and by the kind of power we exercise, by the spirit in which we use our power, we show what spirit we are of, *a power for God* or *a power for the devil*. Surely this is a subject worth our consideration and legitimate in this pulpit. The whole problem of our life, the end of all religion is, to exercise power, i. e. the ability and authority given us by God (to use *the talents* entrusted to us) in obedience to his will and according to his design. Herein we find the proof, that we possess it and have been endowed with it by him (“ye shall receive power^f after the Holy Ghost is come upon you”); therein alone we show, that by his renewing grace we have become “partakers of the divine nature.”

Man is created in the image of God, his high and holy calling is to be like God. In the exercise of this power we must tread in the footsteps of God himself.

The power of God! But can we presume to speak of it? What tongue can tell it, what heart conceive—infinite as it is, beginning and end unlimited but by his own immeasurable power?

I. *The power of God in nature.* The heavens declare that power and the firmament showeth its handiwork, but man can only adore, and as the fire and the storm and the earthquake pass before him—tokens of God's might and power—bows to "the still small voice" which comes in the gentle breeze and tells him, that the life-sustaining, want-supplying, order-keeping laws, his mercies new every morning, are but tokens of the same almighty power, which "makes the seraphs veil their faces and charges the angels with folly." Yes if we could go back to the morning of creation and see world after world roll from his omnipotent hand; if we could travel from star to star and system of stars to system of stars, and count the inmates of created universe and read the laws which bind them in indissoluble order, and trace the forces which make them move as in spherul harmony around his sovereign will; if we could sound the abysses of the deep and decipher the mysteries of the visible creation, and rise to the view of its hidden forces, and cast a glimpse into the ages to come: it would be but the trailing of his garments, the outer sweep of his passing power. The Scriptures, his own revelation, teach us how to view the manifestations of *His* all-creating, all-sustaining power, whose thoughts are facts, whose words creations—"he spake and it was done, he commanded and it stood fast."

Man too has power. Given him when God himself stood sponsor at his cradle in Eden "to subdue the earth, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing, that moveth upon the earth:" even the fall did not rob him of his birthright.—

Though the ground revolted and brought forth "thorns and thistles," though "in the sweat of his brow" he had to defend and secure his very existence, he asserted his power and entered upon the reconquest of his domain. For 6000 years the warfare has lasted, and every age has added spoils to the victor's cause. Every province of nature has been invaded; every element—arrayed in hostility against him—has been braved, fought, mastered and at last forced into his service; the height and the deep been laid under contribution, her secret forces traced and watched and seized upon and placed at his command. He has and exercises and lives by power in the earth, her manor-born king. He steps into the wilderness and the solitary place: and under the labor of his hands and the use of the means gathered in the school of nature and its laws, they obey his bidding, and "the desert rejoices and blossoms as the rose." He stands before the mountain and wills it to be removed and cast into the sea; and with that will goes forth the power of a hundred-handed energy and the appliance of forces taken from nature's own laboratory: and the mountains are cleaved and the hills thrown down. He digs into the bowels of the earth and brings out her hidden treasures, and bids them work for him, warm him, speed his engines and become his tools: and they obey the word of his power. It opens a pathway for him in the sea, sets distance at defiance as he speeds triumphantly along in his fire-driven chariot, and seizes upon the secret of the lightning to make it the carrier of his thoughts and words as with the speed of omnipresence to the farthest ends of the earth. *Power indeed!* The peaceful monk, whose curious art brought together the latent forces of explosion and almost paid with his life for setting free a power, which has revolutionized war and changed the whole aspect of the political world; the humble artizan, who first taught time to give notice of its passing hours and tick out its fleeting minutes; the man, who bound the "winged" word in types and became the father of the press; the me-

chanic, who raised the Southern staple to a royal power by passing it through the gin into the loom; the philosopher, who watched the expansive properties of steam, and calculating its force made it a power in the hand of man; the engineer, filling valleys and levelling mountains, who makes straight the crooked, and the rough places smooth, who hangs his highway over the foaming abyss and forces his tunnel through the everlasting hills: these and such as these are the leaders of the race in its mighty conquest of the forces of nature and have proved, *that man has power in the earth.* But brethren, *power which acknowledges and glorifies and testifies to the power of God*, of which his is but the reflex; which sits at the feet of the great master who has made and upholds the universe in its everlasting laws, and learns to read those laws and apply the facts of experience in harmony with them and the appointed succession of cause and effect; which traces out the hidden secret of its mechanical and chemical properties and appropriates them to their legitimate uses, and produces changes on the face of the earth, and effects results to increase his wealth and comfort and strength, and lays open ever new resources, to proclaim him the lordly tenant, the vice-gerent of God on earth: even so, for only as he obeys the eternal laws of nature, only as he treads in the footsteps of nature's God, can he exercise this power.

II. But we rise from power in nature to *power in providence.* This is *God's power*, the government of his own world. "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein."

From everlasting to everlasting he sits enthroned in his sovereignty and his will ruleth over all. To us is revealed but the brief space of six thousand years that man has existed on the earth; and how little is known to us of them, and of the races that have lived there? What records are left us, what plans revealed? What guide to lead us through the wanderings of its nations, like as his dealings with the

elect people? Ah, we have indeed learned that "he plants his footsteps in the sea and rides upon the storm," that "the pillar of fire by night and the pillar of cloud by day" follow the children of our race; that "deep in unfathomable mines, with never failing skill, he treasures up his bright designs and works his gracious will;" we have learned—even though he should marshal his sore judgments, the judgment and the sword and the pestilence, and "we know not what he doeth," to acknowledge his hand and "trust him for his providence." But who can write the annals of God's government and follow through the ages of his eternal reign?—"His thoughts are not as our thoughts, neither are his ways our ways." No philosophy has yet gone beyond the premises of the passing present. *Faith* only reposes on his promises, which point out to the ark of his Church, midst all the downfall of earthly hopes and calculations, its unfailing and eternal triumph; and in every trying hour, every perplexing visitation, *he* points us to the proofs of his past power and mercy, and bids us rejoice, that "the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

And man? He too has power! Created in the image of God he steps as actor upon the arena of life, himself an energy, a power, a ruling spirit, and makes a history for his race. Have there not been in all ages "*giants* in the earth," with might to achieve events that seemed to shape the destinies of the world? Kings—that would guide the masses and stamp their greatness upon nations? Conquerors—that stretched their sceptre over many lands and gave laws to many tongues? Heroes—that could inspire the feeble with strength, and relieve the oppressed, and break the bonds of thralldom, and bid the swelling tide of despotism stay its fury, and raise above the power of brute force the power of manliness and liberty and truth? Orators—that could command listening senates and sway the heaving masses, and "with the Olympian thunderbolt upon their lips" dictate peace or war by the power of their word? Sages—that

pierced as with heaven-born light the night of darkness and superstition, and moulded future generations by the wisdom of their laws, the sight beyond the outward appearance into the depths of man's mind and God's government, the power of their prophetic spirit? The world's history is made up of such, their influence and power for good or evil, the representative men of their age; or the founders of a new era, who concentrating upon themselves all the acquisitions of the past make them instruments of power with which to march upon the opening future, and write their names upon the progress or the doom of generations yet unborn. It is around their names that the events of history are clustered, and in their lives that this power in man is culminated.—But a *power*, brethren, *held at God's good pleasure* and controlled by his own omnipotent rule; a power used in his hands to carry out his great designs and bring to pass the purposes of his government. No founder of a nation, no prophet, legislator, hero, ever lived to sketch out its life and progress and end; to project a plan for the government of the race and bid the nations at his call advance and take their part in the drama of the world; and prescribe laws by which they should succeed each other, and prophecy which should be called into action, which carry on the work of the world's civilization or abasement, which crown its days with glory or with shame. In the heat of action, under the fire of ambition, a world of courtiers or of slaves bowing before them: men may forget that they are but instruments in God's hand and say "my greatness is grown and reacheth unto the heaven and my dominion unto the end of the earth:" but God stretches out his holy arm, and they learn there is a sovereign above; like Nebuchadnezzar—driven from men and dwelling with the beasts of the field; like Alexander—vainly weeping, that the mighty ocean set bounds to his conquests, but whose vast empire fell to pieces when death overtook him at his drunken revels; like the mighty Cesar—stabbed to the heart in the hour of success,

with time only to cover decently his dying form, but with that regal toga were covered also and forever the lofty designs with which he aspired to bless his conquered world; like the exile of St. Helena—doomed in his living death to see the world fall back the hundred years, which his ambition thought to overleap on the wings of his victorious eagles. *A power indeed!* but itself *the servant of the Power above!* and blessed, truly powerful only, when wielded in God's service, in acknowledged submission to his will and the great law of his eternal government, that only "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people."

III. But much as we have dwelled on this, brethren, we have not yet spoken of the highest and most glorious manifestation of power, whether on the part of God or man.—Power in nature rules over inanimate matter; power in providence and the history of the world rules over masses, which however active or passive, however happy or suffering, do but follow—willingly or unwillingly, knowingly or unknowingly—its irresistible march over the world, seemingly of the powerful of the earth, truly of the God of all power and might. But power is *greatest* when exercised *upon power*, and *upon the highest power conceivable*, the individual himself possessed of intelligence and moral power, *the free agent*.

To come to the point: We know little or nothing of God's power as exercised upon the higher intelligences of his universe, his angels and archangels, the powers, dominions, principalities and thrones of which the Apostle speaks; or upon the powers of darkness and the prince of this world. We only know it is an almighty power, all-wise, just, benevolent and holy. Still less do we know of the power of these lofty beings, and their agency upon each other and upon ourselves. The Apostle lifts the veil a little, when he calls the angels "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them that shall be heirs of salvation;" and all the Bible, our Lord, his Prophets and Apostles warn us of the power of evil, evil spirits, spirits of darkness and destruction and

malice, which war against our race, to rob us of the power of an endless life and spoil us of the powers of the world to come:

But we do know of *God's power over man*, not only in that sovereignty which extends over all creation: but *over man in his individuality*, as a moral being, free to choose and free to act. We do know of *the power of man over his fellow*—not in the influence which moves the masses like pawns on a chess-board: but the power of *mind upon mind, soul upon soul, spirit upon spirit*.

God's power over man, who has rebelled against his government and is at enmity with him, yet free to obey or disobey, and bold enough to set the terrors of God's law at defiance and abide the consequences of his rebellion; over man, whose heart must be won if the conquest is to be real, whose enmity must be overcome—not by brute force and irresistible power (for that would annihilate in him the image of God, his prerogative of free agency:) but *by a power higher than all*—a power to reach the proud heart and subdue it, induce it cheerfully, voluntarily, eagerly to surrender to Him and lay down its arms, aye give it a new spirit which cannot rest satisfied except in the light of his countenance, “his favor which is life and his loving kindness which is better than life;” a power over the stubborn heart to make it willing; a power over the free agent, to resign himself by an act of free will to the will of God; a power, to change enmity to love, to cut loose the soul from self to which it was anchored by nature, and moor it forever and ever and with all its selfdetermining will, all its might and strength, its affections, hopes and powers in the will and love of God! Pass through all creation, conceive of all conditions and degrees of force, of constraining laws and binding power—and what power is like this? a change from hate to love, from hell to heaven, from death to life! A power, to defeat the strong hold of the adversary upon that rebellious heart, to break bonds which have been riveted in

our birth, and grown with our growth, and strengthened with our strength; to give up life-long habits, all that was dear and made up life's happiness and aim; to change the principle and practice; to change and renew the heart from sin to holiness, from self to God; *not* as the impossible result of force, of threatening laws, of terrors of vengeance: the free will must be *won*, it cannot be forced. The speech, the act may be controlled; the intent, the affection is its own. Love, a willing heart can never spring from such a source. A higher, a more blessed, more stupendous power must be God's to win this victory. It is the power of *love*, *God's love*, and this power is revealed in the *gospel* "*the power of God unto salvation.*"

Ah, he could have repressed by one volition the insurrection of his creatures, he could have followed up sin with such immediate and sensible suffering as to make its commission impossible—but that would have been the exercise of force, which would have destroyed free agency and robbed his power of this highest triumph; the victory over the sinful and apostate heart. He could have swept the rebellious race from the face of his fair world, no more to blast its beauty and mar its happiness, and re-peopled by the fiat of his word this stray orb with happier and better beings—but God's power passed beyond the power of destruction; he yearned over the lost and fallen race, and came and spoke the word of life and salvation. *The power of love!* Aye, love, which alone can beget love and win the heart; love, so great, so amazing, so constraining, that the heart to which it is revealed, the heart that trusts to it, *must* turn to him and give up all to Him "who loved us first."

Thy love unknown
Has broken every barrier down!

Love! aye, more than what the world calls love; more than what the pompous rhetoric of the proud philosopher, or the shallow feelings of the dreamy sentimentalist can con-

ceive, who wreathes his brow with the flowers that blossom in his path, and quiets his rising fears with a hope of God's goodness, that would undo his moral government; more than that human standard of God's love, which has never made its prophets yield to the power they sing of, never give up for it one idol of the heart and choose him as the ruler of their lives. No, *it is not in nature*: for along with all the proofs of his love and benevolence which gladden the face of the earth, there go the tokens of a power fearful in destruction, the yawning ruin of the earthquake, the blighted promise of the harvest, the sturdy oak riven by the bolt of heaven. *It is not in God's glorious government of law*: along with his promises to the good and faithful go his fearful threatenings upon the wicked, the inexorable law of vengeance against the disobedient, the certain wages of sin; along with it goes the mysterious discipline of sorrow to his own, which only the power of faith and trust can read. It is only *the love which brings redemption* and opens heaven to the weary, penitent soul; *his love in Christ*, who took upon him all our sufferings and woes, and atoned for all our sins to set us free, and over the altar on which he died for us holds out the hand of reconciliation and brings the boon of mercy and of grace, the free gift of pardon and acceptance; *the self-sacrificing love of God*, who "spared not his own son but delivered him up for us all," that "whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life"—his love to us "while we were yet sinners, at enmity with him;" *it is there alone* where the heart can rest and find hope and peace.—His love to us, the poor prodigals of his universe, the helpless children of deserved and self-imposed ruin; his love which bears their punishment, and opens to them the everlasting arms; it is this love alone, which has power to win back the heart, rescue it from the fatal grasp of self and reclaim it to eternal life. *Love*, with one hand pointing to the cross, and in that mangled, suffering body showing us all our misery and all the doom that was ours, but borne

away by his own self, from love unmerited, unsought, unspeakable; and with the other pointing to the inheritance of light and glory which is purchased for us by that agony and sacrifice; and *pleading*, aye pleading as if his own blessedness was at stake with the perishing sinner, and beseeching him in tones of bleeding, weeping love to be reconciled and live; aye, pleading from the cross, not to let him die in vain; pleading from the seat of glory in heaven, not to rob him of the travail of his soul, the jewels of his crown, souls saved from death and hell, and asking in accents to melt the stoutest heart, "was ever love like mine? Son—give me thine heart!"

Such love—can it be resisted? Is the heart here present that could spurn it, that would not fly to it and give itself, its all to him?

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a tribute far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my life, my soul, my all!

Bear with me, brethren, as I delay you. My subject possesses me. Oh may it possess you, and draw your hearts to open to its power: the love of God!

I pass in review the perfections of the Deity; but love alone, this bleeding, dying, redeeming, self-sacrificing love; which stoops from heaven and empties itself of glory, to speak to the apostate soul the word of life, which surrenders self to save the lost, bearing their sins, suffering their punishment—so great, so unfailing as to wed the rescued soul unto himself for all eternity—this love alone gives me hope and wins my heart. *God's omnipotence*—it is but his arm of strength, not his heart. *God's eternity*—'tis as the boundless waste of the ever moving sea, no rest for the longing soul, for the mind gazing into endless ever-growing distance. *God is holy, just, omniscient*—'tis the very sword of the cherubim, "the sword turning every way to guard the way of the tree of life" from the approach of the sin-convicted soul. *God*

is all-wise—his thoughts as high above ours as the heavens above the earth. I stand amazed, bewildered, but cannot understand him, cannot find him. *But God is love? Love!* brethren—the brightest jewel in his crown of perfections, the essence of his nature, in which all his perfections unite, to which all his perfections do service. Omnipotence—I adore in silent awe! Eternity—I reel in giddiness as I attempt to scan the height and depth, the length and breadth! Justice—I tremble in my conscience-smitten soul! Wisdom I must bow to thy decrees and be resigned! But love!—love! I give myself to thee, I surrender myself, my all, my soul and spirit, my hopes for time and my eternity to love!

Now to be thine, yea thine alone,

O God of love! O Lamb of God, that has revealed, that has ensured, that hast won and sealed and pledged that love to me, and proved it in thy sufferings and agony and dying groan:

O, lamb of God—I come!

This is the power of God.

And brethren, *of like kind is the power of man*, made in his image.

We all know there is a power in man, from mind to mind, from soul to soul, and all life is made up of the passing and repassing of these influences. *A fearful power*, brethren: For does not all experience prove, it may be for evil as well as for good? And more readily for evil? Oh for the influence of example, the influence of a strong mind, the influence of authority or affection; how constantly do we see it abused in the service of sin and the world! No ruined soul in hell, but can trace that ruin to such power in others. Oh God, perhaps parents, brothers, husbands, friends, who have done the devil's work and led the soul placed under their power, led the soul trembling under the

fascination of their influence and example, to eternal misery and not to heaven! Brethren, how parents, how lovers, how friends can be anything but Christians, when the eternal issues of those given in the power of their own are at stake, it passes comprehension! I shudder at the thought, yet the thought which daily experience brings up constantly. We have souls in our charge, I and you, yea all, and God will hold us responsible for them; eternity is before them and you. Oh use your power, use it for their and your everlasting good! For whom shall those hearts be won, to whom subdued? God or the devil?

Believe me, it is only the love of God, which can guide us aright. Our own souls must first be His, and then a power shall spring up and an influence be wielded, which shall make the heavens shout with joy; if not, it is hell that rejoices, and devils which applaud. It is only the power of God's love in the heart, which gives power to gain this victory on earth.

There are souls all around us, and power is given us—this principle alone can make it a saving power.

1. Brethren, *our own souls, power over ourselves!* Oh, do we not know, that this is a victory greater than all which can be won on earth; that "he that subdueth his own heart is greater than he that taketh a city." And it is only through the love of God, through the new and better and stronger affection for Him, we can drive out the love and affection for the idols that dwell there.

It is easy, to put it to the test. Have we that power?—Is self cast out? Is our life elevated? Has that step from death to life been taken which changes the heart from sin to holiness? Are *we* changed, our hearts freed from the dominion of sin? Has the impure mind been cleansed so that it has come again like the mind of a little child? Has the grasp of the miser been relaxed and the avaricious learned to spend and be spent for God and Christ, and holiness and

every righteous cause? Has that ambition been cast out and the soul been taught to kneel to God?

Make me little and unknown,
Love and prized by Thee alone!

Is that spirit of revenge gone, that evil eye, that passionate temper, that selfish fretfulness—and have we learned to “look not on our own things but also on the things of others” and “to esteem others better than ourselves?” and, like Christ, to be lowly and meek and pure, and self-denying, self-sacrificing, kind and gentle?

This power, is it ours? greater than the power to do mighty works, work miracles, remove mountains, and chain the forces of nature to our service? *This power over self*, greater than the cutting off of the right hand and the plucking out of the right eye—is it ours? This change, aye, this radical change, has it been accomplished, greater than all the changes wrought on the surface of the earth, in the society of man? “Has the leopard changed his spots and the Ethiopian his skin?” and yet, it must be so, or we are lost, none of His who has called us to this conquest of self, and given us power “to become the sons of God.”

2. *Power over others.* We have it surely; but power over others, for their good, their eternal good! Have we won them over by precept and example, by a Christ-like walk and purity, by love and devotion and unselfishness? By the manifestation of the power which grace has given us over our own spirits? Do we exercise such power over them?—Do we lead their souls with ours to heaven? Oh, let us flee to Christ and get power of Him, the power of a divine and Christ-like spirit and life! Ours must be either a crown in heaven of souls saved, or a crown of fire in hell of souls lost—by us, by our blessed or baneful power. Mothers, Fathers, Christians! What an alternative! How high, how holy, how fearful your calling!

It is the power of love, of self-sacrifice by which God gains the victory over the will and wins the heart of man.

It is the same *love and self-sacrificing spirit*, which shall give *us* power over human hearts. To this power we are called, beloved; and should it be *the power of suffering*, which is involved in self-sacrifice. All history sets its seal to this power. Men in all ages have felt for it, hoped for it. There is no mythology but the fabled saviour-god passes through suffering; no legendary period of any nation, but it sings of heroes that proved themselves saviours and benefactors by suffering for the good of all. What is this, but the groping of the natural mind, its dim anticipation of the great truth, that redemption demands sacrifice; its intuitive longing for the revelation of the true Saviour, who through suffering and death should work out the salvation of the world? But is it not the noblest ambition, to have this Christ-like power, and be his missionary in the world? Is there a greater reward—"he that converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins?" Is there a higher life—like Christ, by example, by bearing, by charity, by constraining love, by self sacrifice, to be *a power in the earth for God and heaven?* To stand in this world and meet its evil and its evil power; and by the power of a godly life to change the moral desert into an Eden of God; by the power of faithfulness and perseverance in God's service to remove the difficulties, and level the mountains, which the power of the world has raised in the way of the triumphant march of Christ and his Church? To stand in this world and meet its enmity and its sorrows with this power, and bid the weary rest and the mourning rejoice, allay strife and woo the heart by love, relieve suffering and do God's heavenly work on earth "wiping away the tears from their eyes?"

Behold the power of the Gospel! By nature we are a power against God, and thus a power of destruction to ourselves and our fellows. The Gospel, the might of God's converting love, makes us *a power for God and thus for good in the world*. It gives us such power in our inter-

course with others, our social influence, in our public and our private life, Power to leaven the laws of the country and elevate the spirit of the people, and lay the groundwork for a better future ; power in us now, to lay the foundation of our new empire upon the everlasting premises of truth and godliness, to make it a power in the earth for good, a blessing to ourselves, to our children's children and the nations of the world—worthy the sacrifice it cost. Power in our private life, to lay the foundation of true and lasting happiness in the sacred circle of the family, and make every relation of life its channel and every duty its instrument; which from there shall spread in ever-widening circles, and whose influence upon the happiness of others and the world at large, eternity alone shall fully unfold. A power for all—not the monopoly of a privileged few—for all, in every condition of life, every class of men ; for the rich who are God's stewards, for the poor who yet can give "the cup of cold water in the name of a disciple." A power, that commands all circumstances, that turns trials into blessings, that robs death of its sting and rises victorious over the grave!

Yes, *this is power* ; power which lodged in the heart by God himself, goes out and blesses the family, the friendly circle, the community, the state, the world, the living and the coming generations; which goes on conquering and to conquer, and to accomplish the purposes of God's gospel, "peace on earth and good will towards men," and to change the kingdoms of the world into the kingdom of the Lord ; power which reaches the very heavens, and ascends to God himself—for

3. *There is power in man with God!* Not with man only, from mind to mind and spirit to spirit, but with *God* ; not only *for* God and his kingdom, but *with God*. Aye, in prayer to prevail with him, like Israel of old, and draw his saving power down upon ourselves and others ; like Abraham to stay the sentence of his justice and intercede with

him for perishing sinners; like Christ himself to ask forgiveness for his murderers and power for his tempted followers, to claim the life of his redeemed: "Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me be with me where I am." *With God* who will be entreated and invites the violence of earnest, constant prayer, that takes no refusal; *who feels the power* which he gives us over others, for he saith "inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me;" *who yields to this power* when he hears our prayers, when he gives the Holy Ghost to those that ask him; who himself *gives* this power, and *uses this* power, to hasten on the advent of his kingdom and reveal his glory!

Surely *man has power*. But as certain as God has given us power, so certain its exercise in his service and to his glory becomes our duty, our responsibility.

Have *we* this power? This power of faith and love, in faithfulness which endures unto death, perseverance which disarms every difficulty, in the conscientious use of every means given, which proves our earnestness and loyalty and is the pledge of success? The power of prayer which reaches the heart of God, of godliness which glorifies him before men? The power of a holy life on earth which is the earnest of the blessed life above? The power to walk with God and be his ministering spirits in the world, the sons of God and heirs with Christ of his glory?

Brethren—may Almighty God accompany what has been said with his blessing and give us this power to the praise and glory of His holy name! Amen.



